



Bio: Burt Ward

From Caped Crusader to Canine Crusader

Little did aspiring actor Burt Ward know that learning martial arts in addition to his mental and athletic prowess would change his life forever.

As a teen-ager, Burt had all the makings of a true boy wonder. As an all around athlete, strong in martial arts, wrestling, track, tennis and golf, combined with a sharp intellect, playing “first board” in chess for Beverly Hills High School, achieving the top 3% in the U.S. in math and science tests at UCLA, and becoming the world’s fastest reader – Burt tested before the American Medical Society in Beverly Hills, California and was clocked at 30,000 words per minute with 90% comprehension (*the average reader reads 240 words per minute with 40% comprehension*). Burt was featured in an article entitled, “Will the Real Boy Wonder Please Stand Up” and subsequently appeared on the national television educational show “Read Right.”

With the help of his father, a prominent real estate broker in Beverly Hills, CA, Burt became one of the youngest real estate agents in California, and met producer, Saul David, who arranged for him to sign with a Hollywood agent. His first interview was set up at 20th Century Fox Studios, and a few weeks later, Burt was called back for a screen test with Adam West. Holder of a brown belt in karate at the time, Burt showed off his athletic ability for the producers by demonstrating some falls and tumbles, and even broke a one-inch pine board with his hand. Later, Burt attained his black belt from his instructor, All Korean champion, Young Ik Suh. Burt was friends with Bruce Lee. A special piece of movie trivia is that Bruce Lee’s first filmed fight scene of his career was fighting Burt Ward. In October 2015, Burt was inducted into the International Karate and Kickboxing Hall of Fame.

Executive Producer William Dozier commented about Ward’s tall size in comparison to Adam West, and the new Boy Wonder prospect replied, “I promise you, sir, I won’t grow anymore.” Dozier laughed and told Burt that he would hold him to that.

It wasn't until six weeks after the screen test that Burt learned that he had won the coveted role of Robin, the Boy Wonder in the new "Batman" TV series for ABC-TV. He was everything they wanted. All he had to do was just be himself.

Batman Was an Overnight Sensation!

Biff, Bam, Boom! The Ratings Soared!

Burt and Adam West made hundreds of personal appearances together and were featured in dozens of magazine articles, including the cover of Life magazine.

Years later, when accepting Harvard's "Man of the Year" award, Burt brought one of his original Robin costumes, even then valued at six figures. Some students came up to him dressed as security guards and told him they would keep the costume safe. Then, in the middle of Burt's speech, one student stood up and asked, "*When is a costume not a costume? When it's stolen.*" The lights dimmed and the students grabbed the costume and made off. After snapping photos with one another in the cape, they later called Ward and gave the costume back. The ringleader of the gang? Harvard Lampoon editor, Conan O'Brien.

From "Caped Crusader" to "Canine Crusader"

In 1994, Burt and his wife, Tracy Posner Ward, philanthropist and daughter of former corporate raider and billionaire, Victor Posner, rescued a Great Dane in distress. From this experience, they learned about dozens of other Great Danes also needing homes. When they called weeks later to see what had happened to the others, they were horrified to hear that they had all been destroyed. Both Burt and Tracy have a huge love for animals. They made a decision, and created a rescue for Great Danes and other giant dog breeds.

Located 50 miles east of Los Angeles, Gentle Giants Rescue and Adoptions is a non-profit charity created by Burt and Tracy. Gentle Giants has rescued and adopted more than 15,500 giant breed and small breed dogs during their 22 years of operation. All of their dogs are socialized and behaviorally trained, and live communally together in their home. Gentle Giants is now the largest giant breed dog rescue in the world and rescues and finds homes for 45 different dog breeds, ranging from 2 lbs. to 300 lbs.

Traditionally, giant breed dogs usually have short lifespans, living 6-8 years or 7-9 years, depending upon the breed. Spending millions of dollars of their own money and more than a decade of research and testing, and combining their special care and feeding program with their own *all natural* Gentle Giants dog food, Burt and Tracy have successfully doubled the average lifespan of their rescued giant breed dogs, and significantly lengthened the average lifespan of their rescued small and medium breed dogs as well, with dogs living as long as 27 active, healthy years.

Gentle Giants Products manufacturers all natural Gentle Giants dog food which is sold in more than 1,250 stores in California, and in 339 Walmart Supercenters in Oregon,

Arizona, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, North Carolina and Florida. Gentle Giants dog food is sold nationally through mail order on Chewy.com, Walmart.com, and Amazon.com. In California, Gentle Giants is sold in Walmart Supercenters, Stater Bros. Ralphs, and Gelson's.

Gentle Giants has a spectacular new line of wet (canned) dog food, with 90% Beef, 90% Chicken, and 90% Salmon. Gentle Giants Products also has a new line of super premium dog supplements and super premium dog treats.

The Caped Crusader has truly evolved into the Canine Crusader.